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SENATE BILL 898 By
Dixon

HOUSE BILL 725
By Brooks

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3, Chapter 15, relative to minority affairs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3, Chapter 15, is amended by adding Sections 2 through 7 of this act as a new, appropriately designated part.

SECTION 2. There is hereby created within the legislative department, a select committee on minority affairs. The committee shall be composed of ten (10) members as follows: the speaker of the senate shall appoint five (5) members of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint five (5) members of the house of representatives. During the organizational session of each general assembly, the respective speakers shall reappoint or appoint members to serve on the committee. Any vacancies occurring on the committee, between organizational sessions, shall be promptly filled by the respective speakers.

SECTION 2. The select committee on minority affairs shall meet at least quarterly and at the call of the chair. Members of the committee shall be entitled to reimbursement for their expenses in attending meetings of the committee or any subcommittee thereof at the same rates and in the same manner as when attending the general assembly.

SECTION 3. The select committee on minority affairs shall annually elect from its membership a chair, a vice chair and such other officers as it deems necessary.

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SECTION 4. The select committee on minority affairs is authorized to:

- (1) Create subcommittees related to its purposes;
- (2) Request standing committees of the general assembly, the fiscal review committee, as well as the various agencies and entities of state government to study and report on designated policy matters relating to governmental fairness and equality of opportunity for all Tennesseans, including minorities;
- (3) Conduct such meetings and public hearings in Nashville and across the state as shall be necessary;
- (4) Employ committee staff, subject to the availability of funding for such purpose;
- (5) Enter into contracts for technical or professional services, subject to the availability of funding for such purpose: the speaker of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives to jointly determine the qualifications and task or job descriptions of any consultant or other person contracted for services, and to jointly select any such consultant or other person on behalf of the committee;
- (6) Monitor state and local governmental programs and policies to ensure and promote fairness and equality of opportunity for all Tennesseans, including minorities;
- (7) Promote state and local compliance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto; and
- (8) Perform other duties as requested by joint resolution of the general assembly.

SECTION 5. The select committee on minority affairs shall timely publish an annual report which summarizes the committee's activities, findings, recommendations, and proposals. A copy of the annual report shall be distributed to each member of the general assembly.

SECTION 6. It is the duty of the select committee on minority affairs to:

- (1) Review current state policies, as reflected by Tennessee statutes, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary priorities, to ensure and promote

governmental fairness and equality of opportunity for all Tennesseans, including minorities;

(2) Study the special problems which jeopardize the health, safety and/or well being of Tennessee's minority community.

(3) Define and establish the components, guidelines, and objectives of a comprehensive state policy to ensure and promote present and future governmental fairness and equality of opportunity for all Tennesseans, including minorities;

(4) Identify any Tennessee laws, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary priorities which conflict with the components, guidelines, and objectives of such comprehensive policy;

(5) Search for any interdepartmental gaps, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies in the implementation or attainment of such comprehensive policy;

(6) Identify any new laws, regulations, programs, services, and budgetary priorities which are needed to ensure and promote present and future governmental fairness and equality of opportunity for all Tennesseans, including minorities;

(7) Serve as an in-house informational resource for all members and committees of the general assembly on legislative policy matters concerning Tennessee minorities; and

(8) Perform such other activities as are reasonably related to the legislative intent of this part, including, but not necessarily limited to, improving public awareness of the special needs of Tennessee minorities.

SECTION 7. Upon completion of the duties assigned by this part, the select committee on minority affairs shall prepare and publish a final report. The committee shall distribute the final report to each member of the general assembly and to each library officially designated as a depository for state documents and publications. Upon distribution of such report, the

committee shall terminate and shall cease to exist. The committee shall complete such assigned duties as soon as reasonably practicable, but no later than June 30, 2001.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997, the public welfare requiring it.